

indicator plants include Eastern Redbud, Fragrant Sumac (*Rhus aromatica*), Virginia Snakeroot (*Aristolochia serpentaria*), and Little-headed Nutrush (*Scleria oligantha*). There is a notable absence of Ericaceous plants in this forest community.

The Ellis Creek impoundment, created by the damming of the Yadkin River, today supports important wetland habitat. These wetlands may protect water quality in Tuckertown Reservoir by preventing or minimizing flooding, erosion, and sedimentation. The reservoir has also created suitable habitat for American Lotus (*Nelumbo lutea*), a regionally rare, disjunct Coastal Plain/Sandhills plant species. A Piedmont Semi-permanent Impoundment is located upstream of the Ellis Creek impoundment and west of SR 2536. This area appears as seasonally or periodically inundated and may be ideal for amphibian breeding.

Management and Protection: The site is part of the state Game Lands program administered by the North Carolina Wildlife Resource Commission. Recreational use of Ellis Creek Hardwood Slopes is restricted to the lowermost elevations where fishermen have worn footpaths along the south shore of the Ellis Creek impoundment. Maintaining the existing canopy and minimizing site disturbance will help promote older forest conditions and mitigate the spread of invasive species such as Japanese Stilt Grass (*Microstegium vimineum*) and Tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*). Areas with mature pines to the east and west should also be allowed to age-out and succeed naturally to hardwood forest.

Natural Communities: Basic Oak-Hickory Forest, Dry-Mesic Oak-Hickory Forest, Dry Oak-Hickory Forest, Piedmont Monadnock Forest.

Rare Animals: Timber Rattlesnake (*Crotalus horridus*), Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*).

Rare Plants: American Lotus (*Nelumbo lutea*).

References:

Diamond, P.K. 2004. Site Survey Report: Ellis Creek Hardwood Slopes. N.C. Natural Heritage Program, Office of Conservation and Community Affairs, DENR, Raleigh.

Hunting and Fishing Maps for North Carolina Gamelands. June 2002 and June 2001. North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, Raleigh, NC. http://www.wildlife.state.nc.us/pg04_HuntingTrapping/pg4a.htm.

McCachren, C.M. July 1994. Soil Survey of Davidson County, NC. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Soil Conservation Service.

Natural Heritage Program List of the Rare Animal Species of North Carolina. 2001. North Carolina Natural Heritage Program, Division of Parks and Recreation, Department of Environment and Natural Resources. <http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/nhp/>

Natural Heritage Program List of the Rare Plant Species of North Carolina. 2002. North Carolina Natural Heritage Program, Division of Parks and Recreation, Department of Environment and Natural Resources. <http://www.ils.unc.edu/parkproject/nhp/>